

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of the Claims**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for initializing a SNMP (simple network management protocol) v3 device using an SNMP agent in the SNMPv3 device and an SNMP manager remote from the SNMPv3 device, comprising:

utilizing a Diffie-Hellman key exchange protocol by the SNMP manager and the SNMP agent to enter an initial privacy key and an initial authentication key into the SNMPv3 device,

wherein said utilizing step includes:

generating an associated random number and public value by both the SNMP manager and the SNMP agent;

passing the public value of the SNMP manager to the SNMP agent in a configuration file;

reading, by the SNMP manager, the public value of the SNMP agent through a SNMP request using an initial valid user having access to the public value of the SNMP agent;

computing a shared secret, by the SNMP agent and the SNMP manager, using the Diffie-Hellman key exchange protocol;

converting the shared secret into a readable password;

converting the readable password into a secret key; and

setting the initial authentication key and the initial privacy key to the value of the secret key<sub>2</sub>

wherein each of said converting steps are independently performed by both the SNMP agent and the SNMP manager.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the readable password comprises a 16 character password.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the secret key comprises a 16 byte string.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further characterized in that the configuration file comprises a proprietary configuration file element for passing the public value of the SNMP manager to the SNMP agent.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the SNMPv3 device operates in a SNMPv1/v2c enabled network comprising a SNMPv2c device, and wherein the proprietary configuration file element is ignored by the SNMPv2c device.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the public value of the SNMP manager is included in a management information base (MIB) object in the configuration file.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the public value of the SNMP manager is initially stored in a third entity different from that associated with the

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SNMP manager and the SNMP agent, and the method comprises downloading the configuration from the third entity by the SNMP agent.